Configuring relationships between state and non-state actors: A new conceptual approach for sport and development

Authors:

Iain Lindsey (Department of Sport and Exercise Sciences, Durham University)

Tony Chapman (Policy and Practice, St Chad's College, Durham University)

Oliver Dudfield (Commonwealth Secretariat)

Address for Correspondence:

Dr Iain Lindsey

School of Applied Social Sciences

Durham University

42 Old Elvet

Durham University

DH1 3HN

Email: iain.lindsey@durham.ac.uk

Tel: 0191 334 6988

Twitter: @iainlindsey

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Abstract

The importance placed on collective action to enhance the contribution of sport to wider development objectives is reflected in 'partnership' being a pervasive term throughout 'Sport for Development and Peace' (SDP) policy, practice and research. However, state and non-state organisations can be involved in various forms of relationships, which may overlap but also extend beyond those that are encompassed by the often ill-defined terminology of 'partnerships'. The need for more nuanced conceptualisations of how relationships between state and non-state actors may be configured has become more urgent given that the advent of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) brings implications for the engagement of a broader array of sport stakeholders than from the SDP sector alone. Therefore, this article draws on existing categorisations in the development studies literature to identify six potential configurations of relationships between state and non-state actors associated with sport and development, namely: state-centred implementation, complementary implementation, co-produced implementation, non-state-centred implementation, state-led regulation, and non-state-led adversarial advocacy. In practice, the enactment of differently configured relationships will be influenced by political and economic contexts as well as the characteristics of relevant state and non-state actors. Configurations also vary in their utility according to the differing ways in which sport may contribute to particular SDGs and their constituent Targets. These complexities mean that the set of configurations is not presented as a deterministic model but is, rather, a heuristic by which policy makers,

practitioners and researchers can improve analysis, relationships and, ultimately, the contributions of sport to development.

Keywords

Sport for Development and Peace (SDP); Government; Civil Society; Non-governmental organisations (NGOs); Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Partnership

Introduction

This article develops a new conceptualisation of ways in which relationships between state and non-state actors associated with sport and development may be configured. No such conceptualisation has been proposed in the sport and development literature previously. Instead, policy and research debates have often been framed by all-encompassing but imprecise notions of 'partnership'. There is a need for greater differentiation of organisational relationships associated with sport and development, and the conceptualisation offered in this article is intended to prompt new ways of thinking about, and researching, the ways in which relationships between state and non-state actors are currently configured or how they could beneficially be developed in the future.

Changes across sport and development add to the relevance of considering relationships between state and non-state actors in these sectors. The 'Sport for Development and Peace' (SDP) movement that initially emerged around the turn of the century (Kidd, 2008) has continued to expand - engaging growing numbers and, importantly, an increasing diversity of organisations in different contexts across the world (Svensson and Woods, 2017). These developments undoubtedly contributed to the significant acknowledgement of the potential contribution of sport in the latest global development policy framework, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (UNGA, 2015). Likewise, as will be explored further in the next section, the *2030 Agenda* brings new implications for sport in that the broad scope of a number of its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated SDG Targets have relevance beyond the SDP movement alone so as to also implicate actors

engaged with what could be conceived as ‘mainstream’ sport at different levels from grassroots through to elite and professional levels. Therefore, just as the *2030 Agenda* specifically identifies the importance of a wide range of state institutions and non-state organisations to achieving the SDGs, so the same is true of such actors engaged with sport. By way of introduction, an overview of current and potential roles of state and non-state organisations engaged in sport and development is provided in Table 1.

[Table 1 around here]

Given this context, the lack of specific studies of relationships between state and non-state actors associated with sport and development is a major concern. Challenges that occur due to the diversity of state and non-state actors involved across these sectors can still be identified. Difficulties associated with fragmentation and duplication of practice are reported together with problems arising from competition amongst actors (see, for example, Kidd, 2008; Lindsey and Banda, 2011; Giulianotti, 2011b). In individual countries, these problems are often deeply rooted and are associated with historical tensions between some SDP NGOs and government institutions[i]. The potential for international NGOs to enact or impose their own agendas independent of domestic governments has also been a recognised issue (Sanders et al., 2014).

Such problems have not limited enthusiasm for collective action. Indeed, advocacy for multi-sectoral partnerships has been and remains a common and ongoing theme in sport and development policy documents (Hayhurst, 2009; Lindsey and Bitugu,

2018b). However, the discourse of ‘partnership’ can be subject to similar issues to those Black (2009) identifies with many development ‘buzzwords’, namely that their frequent use and application means that they ‘become profoundly ambiguous in their meanings and implications’ (p125). An early SDP policy statement by the United Nations (2006, p61) illustrates this point through broadly stating that:

> *Local development through sport particularly benefits from an integrated partnership approach to sport-in-development involving a full spectrum of actors in field-based community development including all levels of and various sectors of government, sports organizations, NGOs and the private sector.*

The continuing use of such all-encompassing and imprecise language (e.g. UNESCO, 2017) indicates that there is a need for the terminology of partnership to be deconstructed and replaced with more nuanced accounts of relationships between state and non-state actors associated with sport and development. As there are currently no conceptual contributions within the SDP literature to aid this task, the article draws upon classifications of relationships between state and non-state actors that have been proposed in the development studies literature (Teamey, 2010). This article will synthesise and apply such insights to help understand how state and non-state actors associated with sport and development may be configured. After conceptualising six potential configurations of these relationships, the article will then consider the implications of enacting these relationships and the factors that may affect them in practice. First, it is necessary to locate potential configurations within the current policy context by considering more fully the

substantial implications that the *2030 Agenda* and Sustainable Development Goals bring for state and non-state actors associated with sport and development.

Sport and development relationships in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals

The *2030 Agenda* transformed the global policy context for sport and development when it replaced the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with a broader set of seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. While sport was not explicitly mentioned in any of the SDGs themselves, the accompanying *2030 Agenda* text did specifically recognise sport 'as an important enabler of sustainable development' (UNGA, 2015, p10). Indeed, it was emphasised that sport could contribute to a broad range of aspirations including 'promotion of tolerance and respect … the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives' (UNGA, 2015, p10). This was the first time that any overarching policy for global development had included such a wide-ranging statement on sport.

The inclusion of sport in the *2030 Agenda* prompted the development of significant global and transnational policy documents for sport which promoted alignment with particular SDGs and associated SDG Targets. Notable examples of such policy documents are the *Kazan Action Plan* (UNESCO, 2017), adopted at the Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI), and Commonwealth policy guidance on '*Enhancing the contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals'* (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2017). The list of SDGs and SDG Targets identified in

these policy documents is provided in Appendix 1 and the documents themselves give both implicit and explicit recognition of the greater diversity of ways in which sport could be connected and contribute to the array of SDGs than had been the case with preceding MDGs. Similarly, in one of the first academically published analyses of sport and the *2030 Agenda*, Lindsey and Darby (2018) suggest three broadly differentiated ways in which sport may relate to particular SDGs and their associated Targets.

First, existing aims and practices identifiable in the SDP sector continue to be well aligned with various SDGs and Targets. In the SDP sector, sport is characteristically and instrumentally utilised as a tool towards identified, wider developmental objectives (Hayhurst, 2009). Such objectives have included, in different SDP projects and different contexts, those associated with combatting HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases (SDG Target 3.3), reducing alcohol and drug abuse (SDG Target 3.5), developing leadership amongst girls and women (SDG Target 5.5), and the promotion of entrepreneurship and employment (SDG Targets 8.3 and 8.5) . Educational activities are also a central component of many SDP approaches (Rossi and Jeanes, 2016). As such, these approaches could align with SDG Target 4.7, which broadly promotes ‘education for sustainable development’ including elements that may be found in SDP projects such as sustainable lifestyles, citizenship, gender equity, peace and human rights (UNGA, 2015, p17).

Second, within the wide scope of the SDGs, some specific SDG Targets have relevance to more conventional approaches to sports development that are centred on the provision of infrastructure and opportunities to participate and compete in sport (Coalter, 2010). Within the field of sports development, common and long-

standing efforts to address underrepresentation of groups in sport broadly links with the core ‘pledge’ in the *2030 Agenda* that ‘no one is left behind’ (UNGA, 2015, p12). More specifically, attempts to develop women’s participation in sport and reduce other gender disparities may find succour in SDG Target 5.1 to ‘end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere’ (UNGA, 2015, p18). The aspiration to ‘provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces’ (UNGA, 2015, p22) provides another example of an SDG Target (11.7) which has relevance through encouraging provision of facilities that could aid the development of sport participation. More broadly, developing different aspects of sport has been consistently advocated to have benefits such as the reduction of non-communicable diseases or increasing economic growth (SDG Targets 3.3 and 8.1).

A final set of SDGs and Targets bring into focus the need to reform those organisations and practices in sport which are detrimental to development. Issues of violence against women and abuse against children, as captured in SDG Targets 5.2 and 16.2 have been recognised in many sporting contexts and require action (Lang and Hartill 2014). Similarly, the orientation of SDG Targets 8.7 and 8.8 towards eradicating harmful employment practices and protecting labour rights invites scrutiny of the problematic practices of some sport manufacturing companies (Thilbault, 2009), the operation of sporting mega-events (Millward, 2017), and the exploitation of migrant sportspeople, particularly within professional football (Darby, 2013). Recent policies have broadly grouped these and other problems as ‘threats … to the integrity of sport’ (e.g. UNESCO, 2017, p21) and have, in response, sought to foster ‘good governance’ of sporting institutions in line with the principles of accountability and transparency enshrined in SDG Target 16.6.

Clustering SDGs and Targets in this way demonstrates that they can be relevant to organisations and institutions involved with sport in various ways. In particular, the breadth of SDGs and Targets means that they are not the sole preserve of organisations within the SDP movement, but can also be associated with those that are primarily associated with 'mainstream' sport at different levels from grassroots through to elite and professional sport. This is not to say that SDGs and Targets are equally applicable in all contexts and to all organisations and institutions, especially as they are intended to be relevant across 'the entire world, developed and developing countries alike' (UNGA 2015, 3). For this reason, the *2030 Agenda* places significant emphasis on national ownership whereby responsibility for determining SDG priorities and implementation resides with individual countries and their governments. This is combined with recognition that the SDGs cannot be achieved by governments alone; but, rather, that a collective approach is required to 'bring together Governments, the private sector, civil society, the United Nations system and other actors' (UNGA 2015, p10). However, the continuation of the nebulous terminology of 'partnerships' still predominates within the *2030 Agenda,* clouding the potential to analyse and realise purposeful relationships between state and non-state actors in practice. A more precise conceptualisation of such relationships is needed given the range of links between sport and the SDGs and the various ways in which state and non-state actors that may be collectively involved in realising these links. It is towards conceptualising differently configured relationships between state and non-state actors that the article now turns.

Configuring relationships between state and non-state actors

Within the development studies literature, various frameworks have been proposed which conceptualise and categorise relationships between state and non-state actors. These frameworks commonly use similar terminology to describe specific types of relationships. For example, ‘collaboration’ often appears in frameworks proposed by Wamai (2004), Sansom (2006) and Zafar Ullah et al. (2006); ‘contracting’ in those proposed by Brinkeroff (2002), Sansom (2006) and Batley and Mcloughlin (2010); and variants of ‘regulation’ or ‘control’ feature in Sansom’s (2006), Zafar Ullah et al.’s (2006) and Batley and Mcloughlin’s (2010) conceptualisations. Such shared terminology serves as a valuable point of departure in synthesising development studies literature to identify configurations of relationships that may be specifically relevant to sport and development.

Furthermore, Teamey’s (2010) review of development studies frameworks usefully identifies three facets that may enable comprehensive consideration of the range of potential relationships between state and non-state actors in particular country contexts. First, Teamey (2010) recognises that frameworks which are based on simplistic schema for classification, especially if orientated towards a one-dimensional continuum, are inherently limited. Whilst not overcoming such a critique entirely, Najam (2000) provides a two-dimensional framework that differentiates relationships based on: (i) the extent to which there may or may not be alignment between different actors’ desired development aims and (ii) the extent to which the means which actors’ use towards these ends may or may not be compatible. This two-dimensional approach is worth preserving given the diverse range of objectives and operational practices across the breath of sport-based organisations that are relevant to the SDGs.

Second, the more comprehensive frameworks reviewed by Teamey (2010) encompass both those relationships that align with the mutually supportive ethos of 'partnership' and also more adversarial relationships between state and non-state actors. That the extended agendas encompassed by the SDGs may, in particular cases, justify reform within the sport sector indicates the importance of recognising relationships that may be more or less adversarial, in addition to those that may be considered as mutually supportive. Finally, Teamey (2010) argues that the usefulness of many frameworks in the development studies literature is narrowed because relationships are considered primarily from the standpoint of *either* state or non-state actors. The array of potential roles of state and non-state actors associated with sport and development means that it is necessary to recognise different relationships in which the balance of contributions across state and non-state actors may vary.

With these issues in mind, Figure 1 illustrates six potential configurations of relationships between state and non-state actors that are relevant to sport and development. These relationships are differentiated, firstly, according to whether the desired ends of state and non-state actors may align or diverge. Where desired ends align, four 'ideal typical' approaches to implementation are identified: state centred, co-produced, complementary and non-state centred. At the other end of the spectrum, where action of state or non-state actors can detract from achieving development aims, state-led regulatory intervention or non-state led adversarial advocacy configurations are identified. The six configurations are, therefore, differentiated by the extent to which state and/or non-state actors may have primacy

in implementation towards development aims, as the vertical axis in Figure 1 indicates. In the following sub-sections, each of the six configurations are developed and explained in turn. This exposition draws on continued synthesis of conceptual and empirical development studies literature, which is linked throughout to examples and issues that may be particularly relevant to sport and development.

[Figure 1 around/prior to here]

Non-state-centred Implementation

Approaches to implementation in which non-state actors play a central role is the most common configuration for SDP, as well as for sport, provision in many contexts. Research has consistently identified NGOs as being at the forefront of implementing approaches that instrumentally use sport to contribute to various development objectives (Svensson and Woods, 2017). This predominance of NGOs reflects wider and long-standing perceptions that they are better suited than state institutions to contribute to participatory and grassroots development (Mcloughlin, 2011; Banks and Hulme, 2012). For example, local NGOs may be best placed to ensure that sport-based approaches are responsive to local needs, engage those who may be excluded from other forms of provision and utilise innovative approaches to achieve personal and social development (Fokwang, 2009; Thorpe and Rinehart, 2013; Mwaanga and Banda, 2014). Additionally, some sport federations, institutions and organisations can also have existing sport development aspirations that are strongly aligned with particular development objectives. For example, governing bodies and clubs associated with female-dominated sports are, by their very nature, well-aligned

with previously identified SDG Targets that seek to promote female leadership and address discrimination against girls and women. They would independently contribute to these development objectives, just so long as their own resources are sufficient to do so.

Several caveats are necessary. First, practical constraints can distort the extent to which NGOs and other non-state actors are able to offer the forms of provision that are more responsive to the development needs of local communities or target groups (Hulme and Banks, 2012). Accountability may instead be distorted towards powerful external or international donors that SDP NGOs can be reliant upon (Akindes & Kirwan, 2009), presenting issues that will be further emphasised and returned to later in the article. Second, non-state-centred implementation can result in geographic and/or demographic 'unevenness'. For example, Lindsey and Bitugu (2018a) note that provision by SDP NGOs in Ghana and Tanzania is largely limited to specific urban communities. Richards and Foster (2014) similarly identified disparities in engagement by different population groups in an NGO-led football programme for physical and mental health in Gulu, Uganda. Such unevenness would vary across different countries and contexts but, more generally, this configuration may be better suited towards development objectives that are not predicated on universal engagement or scale of provision. Third, the possibilities of this configuration are dependent upon the willingness of non-state actors to respect the autonomy of other independent actors. Failing to do so can result in unnecessary levels of competition and/or duplication of practice that detract from overarching objectives with which all actors broadly agree (Zafar Ullah et al., 2006).

While non-state actors clearly play a pivotal role, this is not to suggest that state institutions lack relevance in this configuration. Indeed, non-state and state actors would generally need to share recognition of mutually agreed ends. As Lindsey (2017) has identified, international SDP NGOs may actually recognise benefit from state institutions providing clarity as to nationally or locally prioritised goals. Furthermore, states play a vital role in providing legal frameworks for the status, registration and operation of non-state actors, be they NGOs, other sporting organisations, or from the private sector (Brinkerhoff, 2002; Zafar Ullah et al., 2006). Within this configuration, however, states would not significantly determine, directly influence, or restrain non-state actors' delivery of sport-based provision orientated towards relevant aspects of development. Any relationships that encompass higher levels of interaction or integration between state and non-state actors would instead resemble one of the other configurations that follow.

Complementary Implementation

Complementary implementation involves close interaction between state and non-state actors, but not to the extent of imposing unnecessary or unwieldy legal, contractual or procedural obligations or constraints on those involved. Such relationships have been explored elsewhere in the development studies literature. Najam's (2000) framework specifically includes a category of 'complementary' relationships in which there is commonality in actors' desired goals but differences in their respective contributions to implementation. Within Zafar Ullah et al.'s (2006) continuum of relationships those that enhance 'cooperation' or 'coordination' could also respectively be considered within and towards the boundary of what may be

considered complementary implementation. More specifically, Maxwell and Riddell (1998) and Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) both recognise that productive policy-related dialogue and information sharing may occur through relatively loose relationships between state and non-state actors.

Complementary relationships could enhance the contribution of sport to development objectives in a number of ways that are aligned with the insights from development studies literature. For example, in relation to SDG 11.7 that was highlighted earlier, state organisations commonly have responsibility for infrastructure and 'green spaces' planning, but doing so in consultation with non-state organisations is important because these actors may subsequently use such spaces for sport-based activities (Paramio-Salcines, 2014). Further examples of complementary relationships can be identified through existing SDP research. In South Africa, Sanders et al. (2014) identified NGOs working with state schools in order to both access school-based facilities and support their engagement with young people. Lindsey and Bitugu (2018b) similarly provide examples from Ghana that illustrate how state institutions for education and health have begun to build their own capacity to utilise sport-based approaches through training from SDP NGOs.

Contributions in the development studies literature usefully recognise other features of complementary relationships together with their limitations. Complementary relationships may be particularly fluid, flexible and diverse depending on context and orientation (Brinkeroff, 2002). As such, state and non-state actors could be involved in complementary relationships of varying levels of formalisation in different institutional contexts. There is also potential for complementary relationships to vary

according to the numbers of actors involved, across a span from bilateral associations between specific state and non-state organisations to wide-scale, multi-actor networks (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010). Similarly, complementary relationships may be open-ended over time, but the involvement of state and non-state actors can vary and does not necessarily need to be continuous (Sansom, 2006). Instead, organisations can ‘step in’ and ‘step out’ without resulting in the cessation of activity.

The goals of complementary relationships amongst state and non-state actors also require consideration. First, while these relationships may have been developed to achieve shared or overlapping objectives, this is not to say that such relationships are the best way to achieve all types of development objectives. Batley (2006) warns that, for example, complementary relationships may not always be well suited to enable the ‘scaling up’ of development efforts in the short-term. Complementary relationships can, nevertheless, provide a location for mutual learning which can lead to the expansion of operations over time through ‘processes of imitation, example and institutional replication’ (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010, p145). Second, it should be recognised that actors are likely to seek some form of benefits for their own organisation through their involvement in complementary relationships (Zafar Ullah et al., 2006). Concomitantly, involvement in complementary relationships is less likely to impinge on individual actors’ autonomy and so there are fewer risks from engagement compared to more formalised, co-produced implementation – as shown below.

Co-produced Implementation

Unlike complementary relationships, co-production requires actors to provide and/or pool resources to a greater extent. Either state or non-state actors may be the source, recipients or conduit for such resources, dependent on the nature of specific relationships. For example, international donors can provide funding for state and non-state actors within particular countries to work towards co-production, as has been the case through the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation's funding for community sport development in Zimbabwe that linked the national Sport and Recreation Commission with local community clubs (Hasselgård and Straume, 2015). Alternatively, states can channel funding to sporting bodies to incentivise or enhance their contribution to development priorities. In the UK, for example, state funding bodies have altered funding conditions so that national governing bodies do not only focus on their own sports development agendas but address issues of governance and gender inequality in doing so (Sport England/UK Sport, 2016).

Although the resource base of co-producing relationships may extend beyond funding, it is the balance of resources amongst state and non-state actors that is key to distinctive characteristics and limitations of this kind of relationship. Sharing resources in co-produced implementation means that formalisation of these relationships is likely and would potentially require documented specification of agreed objectives, practices and accountability mechanisms (Mayhew, 2005; Sansom, 2006). Therefore, these relationships constrain the autonomy of actors to some extent (Batley, 2006). Issues of power and dependency are particularly relevant when resources for co-production are provided by one specific actor. Development studies literature emphasises that this may result in non-state actors

being co-opted into state agendas or apparatus (Najam, 2000; Mcloughlin, 2011). On the other hand, limited government budgets for sport in the global South may allow scope for international donors to exert much stronger influence in co-production (Soublière and Cloutier, 2015).

Co-produced relationships can be further distinguished from complementary relationships because they are more likely to operate within agreed and fixed timescales (Sansom, 2006). Often they involve complex and structured interactions which require greater levels of commitment from those involved. As such, co-produced relationships often involve relatively few state and non-state actors when compared with some of the more diffuse, complementary networks discussed above. One consequence can be that those organisations involved in co-produced interventions are vulnerable to accusations of excluding other organisations with a strong interest in the same area of work. Research across various SDP contexts by Lindsey (2017) and with his colleagues (2017) shows, for example, that smaller or less well-recognised non-state actors are more likely to be excluded from formalised relationships with state institutions. While such criticism has relevance, the effectiveness of co-produced implementation is also dependent on the inclusion of actors that share trust and confidence to deliver on their respective commitments (Hulme and Edwards, 1997; Soublière and Cloutier, 2015).

State-centred Implementation

State institutions taking principal control over implementation is more common in other development sectors than is the case with sport. In part, this reflects

institutionalised expectations surrounding the ‘autonomy of sport’ and is reflected in established non-state organisational structures (such as national or international sport bodies) that can, to varying extents, draw on an independent resource base. Global policy documents associated with sport and development nevertheless recognise issues where the state is more likely to occupy a central role in implementation. The responsibility of governments to ensure universal provision and access to physical education, for example, is consistently recognised in international conventions, declarations and policies (e.g. United Nations, 1989; UNOSDP, 2011; UNESCO, 2015). More recent global sport policy documents have also sought to identify the potential contribution of sport to economic growth (e.g. UNESCO, 2017) which may be aided by governments independently implementing fiscal and tax measures to promote sport-related industries (Dudfield and Dingwall-Smith 2016).

The preceding arguments and examples suggest that state-centred implementation may be less likely in government ministries with specific responsibility for sport, but rather may be actioned by those, such as education or finance, that have wider remits that overlap in some way with sport. In this regard, it is pertinent that the examples in the preceding paragraph specifically relate to SDGs (4 for Education and 8 for Decent Work and Economic Growth) that represent the broadened scope of the *2030 Agenda* when compared to the previous MDGs. The broadening of potential ways in which sport may be aligned with development, as indicated earlier in the article, therefore expands the possibilities of non-sport ministries enacting state-centred implementation associated with sport. Batley and Mcloughlin’s (2010) argument that state-centred implementation is pertinent when universality of provision or scale of impact may also be relevant in this regard.

Universal provision requires substantive capacity on behalf of state institutions. The example of physical education illustrates the importance of caveats in cases where there may be constrained state capacity. In countries in both the global North and South, non-state actors have become more involved in delivery of physical education within schools as a result of limitations of state provision (Njelesani, 2011; Cope et al., 2015). Consequently, there are risks if states lead implementation in a way that precludes or impedes the possibilities of non-state provision (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010). However, the extent to which an overall pattern of state-centred implementation can also accommodate and enable additional aspects of non-state provision is likely to be dependent on the specific orientation and design of governmental systems in particular countries. Such context-specificity is an issue that will be returned to within the penultimate section of the article, given that it can affect all configurations.

State-led regulation

As highlighted earlier, legal frameworks provided by the state may be relevant to, and be supportive of, the operation of non-state actors in all of the configurations discussed so far. Some countries, for example, have legislation that affirms the status of sporting institutions, such as National Olympic Committees or governing bodies for sport. SDP NGOs are also commonly subject to legislation and procedures related to the civil society sector as a whole. As such, non-state actors associated with sport are accorded state recognition, although the form and depth of such recognition varies considerably between countries. There is, however, a

category distinction between recognition and this configuration's orientation towards more substantive forms of state regulation of non-state actors (Sansom, 2006). Regulation can include, for example, determining 'market entry' (i.e. specifying those non-state actors allowed to operate in particular contexts) and/or through ensuring 'minimum service quality levels' (i.e. regulating the ongoing operation of non-state actors) (Sansom, 2006).

Kidd (2008) was the first to raise substantive concerns regarding the 'completely unregulated' status of the SDP sector. This characterisation continues to hold true with arguments for regulatory intervention by states in relation to sport also given further justification as a result of the broadened agendas encompassed by the SDGs. Educational goals associated with sport have, for instance, been recognised throughout the article and the increasing trend of privately-employed coaches delivering physical education and school sport in many contexts has led to calls for the adoption and application of regulatory standards for such provision (Blair and Capel, 2011; Gordon et al., 2016). The inclusion within the SDGs of issues such as abuse and violence against children and women and the need to combat corruption represents a significant shift in development policy with consequences for when intrusion through state regulation may be justified. No sport organisation, not just those in the SDP sector, can fall back on arguments for the autonomy of sport from state interference if they fail to address such problems. State regulation thus becomes appropriate in cases where the implementation practices of non-state actors would significantly detract from development.

Defining the terrain upon which state-led regulation should be enacted remains controversial. This is especially so when there is no clear moral justification for regulation which constrains non-state actors from contributing in a positive way to development. As Batley and Mcloughlin (2010, p136) put it, state regulation 'may have an adverse impact … without achieving compensatory benefits'. Moreover, especially in the global South, states themselves can lack the capacity for, or be burdened by, the processing of information on non-state actors that is required for effective regulation (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010; Kidd, 2008). State encouragement or support for collective self-regulation by non-state actors may instead require lower levels of capacity and engagement on behalf of the state (Sansom, 2006), and thus may be an option that could be given further consideration in sport.

Non-state-led adversarial advocacy

In comparison to their more supportive roles in the first four configurations, non-state actors that are associated with sport have been less commonly involved in positioning themselves as 'challengers' to (Pereira, 2005) or in 'adversarial relationships' with (Young, 2000) state institutions. This may be attributed to non-state actors' common belief in the potential for sport to positively contribute to development and their resultant focus on delivery of sport-based activities rather than advocacy that may be directed towards state actors (Lindsey and Bitugu, 2018a). That stated, Giulianotti (2011a) has noted the existence of some non-state actors that take more radical approaches to addressing problematic issues associated with sport and development. Adversarial advocacy by non-state actors has particular pertinence when state-led policies and practices associated with sport

are detrimental to SDGs and specific Targets. For example, campaigns around the hosting of sporting mega-events have highlighted particular states that have been complicit with, or even responsible for, breaches of those human and workers' rights that SDG 8.8 seeks to protect (Millward, 2017).

Such an example may appear relatively straightforward in moral terms, but significant complexities associated with adversarial relationships can be readily identified. Non-state actors in this configuration are not necessarily instituted as organisations, with athletes, activists, reporters and academics also operating individually or in networks (Giulianotti, 2011a; Wilson et al., 2015). For individual non-state actors, there can be considerable difficulty if they hold multiple interests which may concurrently straddle more mutually-supportive and more adversarial relationships with state institutions (Banks and Hulme, 2012). Political issues regarding neo-colonialism can also come to the fore when advocacy is undertaken by international non-state actors, often from the global North, who wish to change policies or practices enacted by states in the global South (Giulianotti, 2011a). Complexities are also evident in cases where state and non-state actors hold significantly different interpretations of what achieving particular development aspirations may involve. Peace is a significant theme within the *2030 Agenda* and is particularly associated with is the focus of SDG 16 and yet, in the example of the Israel-Palestine conflict, sport has been rhetorically and practically used in radically different ways by opposing state and non-state actors that have each asserted moral authority for their differing actions (Dart, 2017). It is therefore the case that adversarial relationships between non-state and state actors all have complex political dimensions at their core.

Enacting differently configured relationships between state and non-state actors

The previous section has identified six configurations of relationships between state and non-state actors associated with sport and development. The purpose of this section is to develop understanding of how these relationships may be enacted in practice. The first half of the section explains why implementation by or amongst state and non-state actors is inevitably a complex balancing act. This is followed by an exploration of factors that influence the realisation of differently configured relationships, and offers observations on the differing potential for sport to contribute to development objectives through each of them.

Complexities in and across relationships between state and non-state actors

The six configurations of relationships between state and non-state actors are not mutually exclusive. Individual actors may engage in several, differently configured relationships at the same time. To give a practical example, Lindsey and Bitugu (2018b) show that the NGO, Right to Play Ghana, has relatively informal complementary relationships focused on policy dialogue with national ministries whilst also, at a localised level, being more formally involved in the co-production of SDP opportunities with various state schools. State ministries, departments and agencies are equally likely to have multiple relationships with non-state actors in a variety of configurations. In a single country, the whole range of state and non-state

actors may work in types of relationships which span all six configurations identified in the previous section.

It should also be expected that complex interactions amongst state and non-state organisations will, in practice, cut across and blur distinctions between the six configurations identified. This is not problematic given that the set of configurations should be thought of as a heuristic device. For example, it may not be easy to differentiate in practice between non-state actors' involvement in complementary relationships in which they engage in policy dialogue with state institutions and their adoption of more adversarial positions to challenge state policies or practices. Similarly, there may be blurred boundaries between states offering passive support (for example, by developing a coherent policy framework) and imposing regulatory or other constraints on implementation by non-state actors (for example, seeking to ensure that NGOs align to a national policy framework). That different state and non-state actors (and also researchers) may interpret these relationships in different ways emphasises the impossibility of maintaining sharp divisions between the six configurations in practice.

The way that lines between different configurations are blurred is, in turn, affected by temporal factors. The practical enactment of any relationship, and the extent to which particular outcomes may or may not be realised, inevitably gives rise to changes for those state and non-state actors involved (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010; Soublière and Cloutier, 2015). Moreover, as explored further in the next subsection, fluidity can be increased over time in response to the changing contexts within which these relationships occur. These complexities mean that the six configurations

should be considered as dynamic rather than static and, in practice, particular relationships may change to resemble different configurations to a greater or lesser extent over time. As an empirical matter, considering how relations between state and non-state actors may change and potentially evolve over time may be a particularly pertinent issue for future sport and development research.

Factors affecting the realisation of differently configured relationships between state and non-state actors

The *political context* of any country is significant in influencing configurations of relationships between state and non-state actors. Existing comparative research indicates that national sport policies, for example, are influenced by the orientation of specific countries' overall welfare regime (Bergsgard et al., 2007; Nicholson et al., 2011).The extent to which a state orientates itself towards neo-liberal or social democratic regimes, for example, has implications for relationships between state and non-state actors that are associated with sport and development. Similarly, such relationships would also be shaped by the level of decentralisation evident and prioritised by a state (Bawole and Hossain, 2015). State and non-state actors associated with sport are unlikely to be in a position to exert substantive influence upon the wider political context - they are more likely to have to respond to existing political circumstances. This in turn shapes choices on which configurations of relationships they can enter into in order to work towards desired development objectives.

Similar constraints and influences on the configuration of relationships comes from the *network of power relationships* within which state and non-state actors are situated and by which they operate. Most obviously, the extent of resources held by international non-state donors can place them in a position whereby they have greater or even unilateral power to shape, determine or bypass relationships with less well-resourced state institutions in countries of the global South. The practices and approaches of in-country non-state actors can also be affected by their international and/or domestic funding arrangements which, again, will have consequences for the relationships that they may have or develop with respective state institutions. Non-state actors with different interests or roles at different levels of sport can also seek relative advantage over each other when developing and embedding relationships with state institutions. Therefore, while the article has focused on relationships between state and non-state actors specifically, it must be recognised that neither sector can be entirely autonomous given that both are engaged in webs of other relationships from which they may draw influence, or be subjected to constraints imposed by others.

Similarly, but more specifically, the *characteristics of state and non-state actors* represent another cluster of influences on the realisation of relationships between them. The respective capacities of state and non-state actors is a central issue that affects the establishment, operation and effectiveness of differently configured relationships (Batley and Mcloughlin, 2010). A lack of state capacity to provide resources for sport has led to the emergence of SDP approaches based primarily on NGOs in a number of country contexts (Kidd, 2008; Lindsey et al., 2017). Financial capacity is, however, but one of a range of different capacities that may be

differentially held by state and non-state actors. For example, state institutions may have institutional or legal capacities for co-ordination or regulation which are very different from the expertise-orientated resources possessed by those non-state actors which represent individual sports or engage in community-centred development. There is the potential, therefore, for differently configured relationships to productively build on the different capacities of state and/or non-state actors. On the other hand, Batley and Mcloughlin (2010) bring attention to the risk of negative outcomes if either state or non-state actors adopt roles that they do not have the capacities to fulfil.

Other specific characteristics of individual actors may also influence, positively and negatively, the possibilities of differently configured relationships. Research by Yarrow (2011) and Brass (2012) in Ghana and Kenya respectively demonstrates in great detail how many particular relationships between state and non-state actors are affected in various ways by the personal histories, characteristics and attitudes of the individual personnel involved. Changes in senior politicians and senior civil servants who have held varying personal attitudes towards sport can have, often sudden, implications for ongoing relationships between state and non-state actors irrespective of context[ii]. Furthermore, the extent of individual and institutionalised trust between different actors is a key determinant of relationships as, for example, Reis et al. (2016) found in SfD programmes in Brazilian communities in which there was a longstanding mistrust in government institutions.

Finally, the *nature of actors' individual and collective objectives* also influences the way relationships between them are configured. It is extremely rare for actors not to

have their own financial and organisational sustainability, if not their own profit or advantage, as a key focus that sits alongside any aspirations to achieve wider developmental objectives. State and non-state actor's engagement in differently configured relationships has consequences not only for the achievement of wider development objectives but also for their own ends as an organisation or institution. Putting this in practical terms, Saunders *et al.* (2014, p801) recognises that 'partnering with government is a catch-22 situation for many civil society organisations as it may empower them with funding and resources but may limit their independence'. Such implications will vary according to the specific configuration of relationships between state and non-state actors. Co-producing relationships, as one example, place greater constraints on actors independently furthering their own, distinct objectives than engagement in complementary relationships would. More significant consequences may arise in cases where more adversarial relationships offer direct challenge to particular actors' aspired or realised ends.

Beyond the objectives of individual actors, different configurations of relationships may have more or less relevance depending on different ways in which sport may relate to particular SDGs and their associated Targets. More adversarial relationships associated with either state regulation or non-state advocacy may be particularly relevant, not to say morally justified in some cases, when practices associated with sport may be detrimental to development, or specific SDGs and Targets. Alternatively, the use of sport-based activities to instrumentally contribute to various SDGs and Targets often requires engagement with otherwise excluded groups or the provision of adaptive support for personal and social development. These approaches may likely benefit from configurations that allow greater flexibility

for non-state actors that have specialised capacity to implement localised and in-depth approaches. On the other hand, greater state engagement in relationships may be required when a meaningful contribution of sport to SDG Targets requires implementation on a wider or more uniform scale. Improving physical education to realise developmental and educational purposes was cited earlier as such a case, as may be implementation towards increasing population-level participation in sport and physical activity so as to combat non-communicable diseases. All of these considerations are necessarily offered broadly and cautiously at this point. There is certainly a need for empirical research that investigates how existing and emerging relationships between state and non-state actors may be orientated according to the different ways in which sport may be associated with, contribute to or detract from individual SDGs and Targets.

Conclusions

The preceding section has highlighted many complexities that are important to implementation of any of the six configurations of relationships between state and non-state actors which have been identified. The conclusion to draw from this analysis is that the set of six configurations should not be considered as a model or a framework or, worse still, a tool kit that can be harnessed in a deterministic way. Instead, the purpose of identifying and examining potential configurations of state and non-state actors in this article is to provide a heuristic device for policy makers, practitioners and researchers to use to better understand how different relationships may (or may not) enhance potential contributions of sport to development.

For policy makers and practitioners, specifically, the article has demonstrated the importance of moving beyond the simplistic terminology of ‘partnership’ that has continued to predominate across sport and development sectors. Different configurations of relationships between state and non-state actors involved with sport have varying applicability towards different SDGs and targets. While the *2030 Agenda* is intended to involve and be relevant to all countries, individual countries are expected to prioritise and develop implementation approaches towards SDGs that are appropriate in their own contexts. Therefore, options to pursue particular configurations of relationships to enhance the potential contribution of sport to particular SDGs and Targets are most appropriately determined within individual countries. In making such decisions, influential contextual and organisational factors that have been explored throughout the article are important for both state and non-state actors to consider.

The article also serves to identify and encourage investigation of new agendas for sport and development research. That there have been few studies in the SDP field that consider the enactment and implications of relationships between state and non-state actors is an obvious but relevant limitation, and the conceptualisation offered in this article can underpin new empirical studies that can address this gap. Moreover, the extensive development studies literature on relationships between state and non-state actors has yet to substantially consider the extent to which specific types of relationships may be more or less relevant to different development objectives. Addressing this gap in understanding is now especially important given the broad range of SDGs and Targets set in the *2030 Agenda.* With sport having relevance across multiple SDGs and Targets, research that utilises the conceptualisation and

ideas presented in this article in examining differently configured relationships across sport and development has the potential to make substantive contributions not only in the SDP field but also across development studies. The article thus presents and supports a novel, ambitious and challenging research agenda. It is an agenda that requires significant work from sport and development researchers, but one that would bring ongoing and valuable rewards across policy, practice and academia.

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[Appendix 1 Around Here]

Figure 1: Configurations of relationships between state and non-state actors

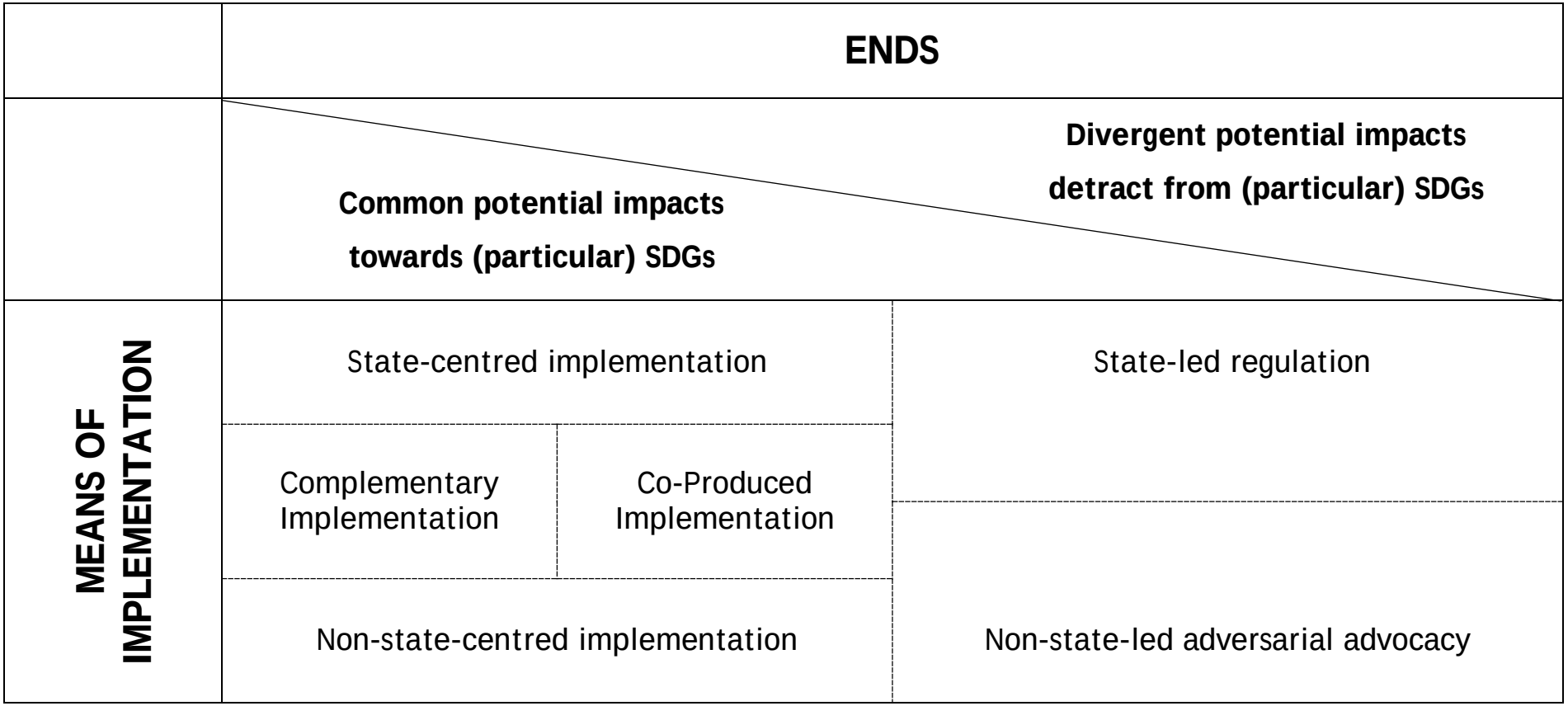

Table 1: State and Non-State Actors in Sport and Development

State Actors	'The state' encompasses a range governmental and public institutions within a specific country. Distinctions can be made amongst state institutions and organisations that have relevance to sport: • between governmental ministries that have specific responsibilities for sport and those (e.g. health and education) whose wider responsibilities have some specific relevance or overlap across sport and development. • across different tiers of the state, including national (e.g. government and national sports councils), sub-national (e.g. regional/local authorities), and local (e.g. schools) levels. Global policy documents (SDP International Working Group, 2006; UNESCO, 2017) have continually advocated for greater state involvement in SDP. There remains significant variation across countries in the extent to which governments have actively sought to use sport to contribute to development objectives (Dudfield, 2014; Keim and de Conning, 2014; Lindsey and Bitugu, 2018).
Non-state actors	The set of non-state actors associated with sport and development includes *non-governmental organisations (NGOs)*, *sporting federations and bodies*, and *private sector businesses*. • NGOs are particularly prevalent and prominent as key actors in the SDP 'movement' (Levermore, 2008; Mwaanga, 2014; Svensson & Woods, 2017). There is considerable diversity amongst both development and SDP NGOs. NGOs range from those that work across multiple countries to those that are located within, and focus on, specific communities (Giulianotti, 2011b; Mwaanga, 2014). The scale, availability and security of resources of such NGOs can also vary to significant degrees. • International sporting bodies such as the IOC and FIFA have often made strong policy statements in support of the role of sport in development and have funded a variety of organisations to implement programmes in particular regions, countries and contexts (Giulianotti, 2011a; Manzo, 2012). There are also examples of national governing bodies and other sport organisations that have engaged with development issues relevant to their own country contexts (Banda, 2017; Khoo et al., 2014). • Transnational corporations have been influential in SDP through instigating their own specific 'Corporate Social Responsibility' programmes (Giulianotti, 2011b). Domestic private sector organisations both within and beyond the sport industry itself can also be of relevance to sport and development.

Appendix 1: SDGs and SDG Targets prioritised in global sport policy documents

(Commonwealth Secretariat, 2017; UNESCO, 2017)

Sustainable Development Goal	SDG Target Number	SDG Target Description
SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all, at all ages	**3.3**	By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases
	3.4	By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention, treatment and promoting mental health and wellbeing
	3.5	Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol
	3.7	By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes
SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	**4.1**	By 2030, aim to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes.
	4.4	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
	4.5	By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations
	4.7	By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development including … human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development
SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	**5.1**	End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
	5.2	eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

	5.3	Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
	5.5	Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.
SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	**8.2**	Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors
	8.3	Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
	8.5	By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
	8.6	By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training.
	8.7	Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms
	8.8	Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.
SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	**10.2**	By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
	10.7	Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies
SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	**11.3**	By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.
	11.7	By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities.

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	**12.1**	Implement the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing ocuntries
	12.2	By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources
	12.6	Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustability information into their reporting cycle
	12.8	By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness of sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature
	12.b	Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products
SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	**13.1**	Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries
SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	**16.1**	Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere, by building relationships, encouraging positive interaction, and foster respect between groups affected by conflict or marginalisation.
	16.2	End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
	16.3	Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
	16.4	By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime
	16.5	Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.
	16.6	Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
	16.7	Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decisions-making at all levels

[i] See, for example, Sanders et al., 2014 and Lindsey et al., 2017, who identify longstanding issues of organisational status and racial profiles as being problematic for such relationships in different African contexts.

[ii] See, for example, Lindsey (2016) in respect of Ghana, and Lindsey (2018) in respect of England